

BELOW IS AN OUTLINE BLANK SUGGESTED FOR THE PRESENTATION OF AN AUTHOR'S IDEAS AS TO HOW THE TOTAL AMERICAN TAX REVENUE, FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL SHOULD BE RAISED. IT INCLUDES SAMPLE ENTRIES CONTAINED FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF ILLUSTRATING THE CONCRETE AND PRECISE FORM IN WHICH IT IS DESIRED THOSE VIEWS WILL BE PRESENTED

**Outline form for
THE MODEL AMERICAN FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL TAX SYSTEM AS OF
JANUARY 1, 1938, PROPOSED BY _____**
(Give name)

Legal citation	Title of tax	Payment A = Annual S = Single	Basis of tax	Measure of tax	Rate of tax	ADMINISTRATION OF TAX			DISPOSITION			Day of taxable status or year of report on which tax is computed	Date return or information is due	Date tax is due	Approximate revenue
						Assessment by	Levy by	Collection by	Federal	State	Local				
Art. 1, U. S. Revenue Law.	Customs.....	S	Importation of commodity.	Value or quantity.	Various.....	Federal inspectors.	Permanent, federal legislature.	Federal collectors	All....	None.	None.	Date of importation.	Date of importation.	Date of importation.	\$ 320,000,000
Art. 2, U. S. Revenue Law.	Income.....	A	Individual, estate or trust net income.	Net income...	1% to 25% but not less than \$10 if of the age of 21, less state income taxes.	Federal internal revenue bureau.	Permanent, federal legislature.	Federal collectors	All....	None.	None.	Year ended Dec. 31.	Mar. 15.....	Mar. 15.....	2,250,000,000
Art. 3, U. S. Revenue Law.	Estate.....	S	Transfer of net estate less deductions.	Value of property.	1% to 20% less state estate taxes.	Federal internal revenue bureau.	Permanent, federal legislature.	Federal collectors	All....	None.	None.	Date of death.	One year from death.	Date of death.	40,000,000
Art. 4, U. S. Revenue Law.	Tobacco.....	S	Tobacco products of all kinds.	Value and flat rate.	Various.....	Federal internal revenue bureau.	Permanent, federal legislature.	Federal collectors	All....	None.	None.	Date of sale..	Mar. 1 for preceding calendar year.	When stamps therefor are sold.	600,000,000
Art. 1, Tax Law (48 states).	Real estate...	A	Real estate.	Value of property.	Fixed by state and local legislative bodies to meet budget requirements.	State assessors..	State, by state legislature, local, by local legislative bodies.	County collectors	None..	Part.	Part.	June 30.....	June 30, if any	Jan. 1 following.	3,000,000,000
Art. 2, Tax Law (48 states).	Income.....	A	Individual, estate or trust net income.	Net income...	1/2% to 12 1/2% but not less than \$5 if of the age of 21, 4/5 of 1% to 16%, credit being allowed for estate taxes of other states.	State Tax Commission.	Permanent, state legislature.	State Tax Commission.	None..	Part.	Part.	Year ended Dec. 31.	Mar. 15.....	Mar. 15.....	2,250,000,000
Art. 3, Tax Law (48 states).	Estate.....	S	Transfer of net estate less deductions.	Value of property.	4/5 of 1% to 16%, credit being allowed for estate taxes of other states.	State Tax Commission.	Permanent, state legislature.	State Tax Commission.	None..	Part.	Part.	Date of death.	One year from death.	Date of death.	200,000,000
Art. 4, Tax Law (48 states).	Registration of motor vehicles.	A	Ownership and operation of motor vehicles in state.	Flat rate.....	\$3.....	Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.	Permanent, state legislature.	Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.	None..	1/2..	1/2..	Date of license	Date of license	Jan. 1.....	140,000,000
Art. 5, Tax Law (48 states).	License of operators and chauffeurs.	A	Right to operate motor vehicles and motorcycles.	Flat rate.....	\$1.....	Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.	Permanent, state legislature.	Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.	None..	1/2..	1/2..	Date of license	Date of license	Jan. 1.....	50,000,000
Art. 6, Tax Law (48 states).	Gasoline.....	S	Gasoline brought into state by refiners or distributors.	Gallon.....	5c.....	Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.	Permanent, state legislature.	Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.	None..	1/2..	1/2..	Date of entry.	Mar. 1.....	Mar. 1.....	700,000,000
Art. 7, Tax Law (48 states).	Amusements (various).	S	Privilege of doing business in state.	Cost of admission.	25%.....	State Tax Commission.	Permanent, state legislature.	State Tax Commission.	None..	1/2..	1/2..	Year ended Dec. 31.	Mar. 1.....	Mar. 1.....	250,000,000
Art. 8, Tax Law (48 states).	Corporation organization.	S	Organization of stock corporations.	Authorized capital stock.	1%.....	State Tax Commission.	Permanent, state legislature.	State Tax Commission.	None..	All..	None.	Date of incorporation or increase of stock.	Prior to incorporation or increase of stock.	Date of incorporation or increase of stock.	200,000,000
\$10,000,000,000															

NOTE: There would be various minor taxes, licenses and fees with revenues too small for inclusion in this chart which is restricted to the more important sources of tax revenue.

EXPERT OPINION ON TAXATION

In the foregoing pages the tax systems of various national and state or provincial governments have been presented in the form of charts as they exist in law. In comparison or in contrast thereto it is desired to have future editions of this report include charts of the opinions of recognized authorities on taxation presented in the same concrete form. Such statements would provide legislators and other officials and the public at large with precise and definite statements on how the tax revenues in this country should be raised. With figures attached to indicate relative importance, there would be no possibility of these opinions being misinterpreted. And their essential nature could be grasped at a glance. A governor, a legislator, a chairman of a finance committee or other public official could determine quickly and certainly how far his tax program differs from those suggested by experts in the field of taxation. Then he could compare the arguments for his plan with those advanced by the author of any chart in support of his proposed system.

Another result from such a collection of opinions would be to focus the attention of students of taxation on the problems of developing a tax system which is sound both in theory and in practice. Their appearance year after year would make inevitably for this result. It is hoped that a number of authorities on taxation will contribute their opinions each year until finally this section will present in compact form the views of all persons whose work in taxation is of national or international significance. Each author is to have one page divided as he chooses between the chart which he proposes and the reasons submitted in advocacy or in explanation of it. The plan is for these opinions to be kept up to date. Whenever a new edition appears each author will have the opportunity to publish such revision of his views as he desires.

SIGNATURE

Name of individual or organization.....

Official title.....

Address—State.....City.....Street and Number.....

Date.....

Please indicate whether the above chart is proposed as (1) the ideal system..... or (2) the practicable system to be worked for..... or (3) both.....

Is the author's permission given to publish the above proposed system?.....

Number of years during which author has been a student of taxation and related matters.....

NOTE: The author of each chart is requested to answer all the questions indicated by the column headings above.

OUTLINE OF MODEL TAX SYSTEM FOR THE UNITED STATES

Proposed by Professor Elmer D. Fagan, Stanford University

I. Sources of Revenue for Federal Government

- * A. Graduate personal income tax
 - a. Earned incomes taxed at lower rate than unearned incomes.
 - b. Capital gains should be taxed: deductions for capital losses—I favor Harold Groves' plan for handling capital gains and losses. (See *New Republic* about Feb. 7, 1934.)
- * B. Graduated inheritance tax and gift tax
- C. Import duties:
 - 1. for revenue (on non-necessities)
 - 2. for bargaining purposes
- D. Privilege tax (license fee) on corporations
- E. Tax on undistributed earnings of corporations
- * F. "Such luxury taxes as can be practically administered" (tobacco, liquor, soft drinks, etc.)
- G. Fees and public prices. (Inspection fees, passports, income from publicly owned forests and mineral lands, etc.)

Federal Government should administer the *gasoline tax* and distribute major part of proceeds of same to states according to an "acceptable" basis. States should have the privilege of supplements or additions.—I use the word "acceptable" for lack of a better term. Here it seems to me is one of our most important problems: How to tax on the basis of ability and expend on the basis of need under a form of government such as these United States? It seems to me that we must work out a satisfactory system of distributing Federally administered income, inheritance, and luxury taxes.

II. Sources of Revenue for State Government

- ** A. Share of Federally administered personal income tax
- ** B. Share of Federally administered inheritance tax
- *** C. Major part of Federally administered gasoline tax
- D. Share of Federally administered luxury tax
- E. Severance taxes
- F. Fees and public prices

- 1. Motor vehicle fees (pleasure—flat rate; commercial—based on weight and type of tire)
- 2. Inspection fees, etc.

III. Sources of Revenue for Local Political Units

- A. Classified property tax for (a) tangible personalty and (b) real estate.
 - 1. Intangibles should be exempt from taxation as property; but income from intangibles, including all future issue of Federal, state, and municipal securities, should be subject to the personal income tax.
 - 2. Improvements should be taxed at a lower rate than land.
 - 3. "Net rental" or "estimated rental" where property is not leased as against capital value as basis of assessment of real property.
 - 4. Assessment of property should be done under the supervision of a permanent state tax commission.
- B. Special tax on the unearned increment in land value
- C. Special assessments (limited to conditions under which benefit is primarily specific and measurable)
- D. Fees and public prices****

Graduate personal income, graduated inheritance taxes, luxury taxes, and gasoline taxes should furnish the major portion of Federal and state revenues—the graduated personal income taxes being the most important single source. The classified property tax should constitute the most important source of local revenue.

* Income from Sources A, B, and F should be shared with the states on basis of "acceptable" criterion or criteria of need.
 ** To source A and B the state should have the power to make supplements or additions. Administration should still be in the hands of the Federal Government.
 *** Proceeds from the gasoline tax should be used exclusively for highways and streets. The states should share proceeds of gasoline tax (Federally administered) with the local units. Basis of distribution between state and local units to be determined by permanent state tax commission.
 **** Space limitations preclude the presentation of a theory of public prices.

ANSWERS BY AMERICAN PROFESSORS OF PUBLIC FINANCE TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON TAXATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE RELATIONSHIPS OF THE FEDERAL TAX SYSTEM ON THE ONE HAND AND OF THE STATE-AND-LOCAL TAX SYSTEMS ON THE OTHER¹

The question in each column was whether the respondent favored the indicated situation. In this tabulation Y (= Yes) or N (= No) has been entered where it was the only reply and also where the respondent added some discussion but making it plain that his general position was either Y or N. The *, meaning too many doubts and qualifications for an answer of either Yes or No, has been entered where it was the respondent's sole reply and also where there was given some discussion which made it apparent that Yes or No was not the predominant attitude of the respondent. The limitations of this questionnaire method necessitate that every Y and N be taken as the general position of the respondent and not his position under all circumstances. In fact there are doubtless frequently many exceptions to his general attitude. Every one of the collaborating professors will probably recognize these limitations and it is hoped this statement will make the matter completely clear to every one else. Useful as this final printed table is, it can, nevertheless, be seriously abused by anyone who does not appreciate this situation. And one of the worst abuses would be the citing or imputing of inconsistencies in the replies of any given individual while assuming that the Y's and N's are complete answers, whereas if space permitted the complete answers would show the respondent was entirely consistent with himself throughout. And in every case the reader should understand that the replies reflect the attitude of the individual professor and he must not assume that they reflect the attitude of the college.

Interesting and important as are the replies of each professor considered by themselves, the primary usefulness of the table, however, is the general picture which it presents. It probably is the first time in history that anybody has been able to get a definite and approximately accurate idea of what prevailing American tax opinion really is. The table shows clearly various matters about which there is a great preponderance of opinion, various matters about which there is very divided opinion, and it indicates many matters where it is difficult to formulate unambiguous questions. But it should be realized that all of the matters inquired about are to be decided by our law makers one way or the other.

It is believed that the respondents themselves prefer to have the table briefer and more condensed because of the omission of the numerous qualifications which many of them added. The table is sufficiently unwieldy as it is but it would have been much more unwieldy if it had included such supplementary addenda. If a majority or a considerable percentage of the professors desire to have this tabulation an annual matter, an inquiry can be included with the view to finding out whether they prefer to have the final table elaborated to include the various qualifications or whether they prefer to have the table condensed by excluding them, and future tabulations can be governed accordingly. If this is to become an annual matter every effort possible will be made to make it as significant as possible. And any proposed revisions of the inquiries or of any individual inquiry will be welcome.

It is desirable to include here the letter of invitation to collaborate which was sent to the university presidents.

Dear Mr. President:

It is earnestly hoped that the matter submitted herewith will impress you as being of sufficient importance to deserve your effective cooperation.

A long and varied experience in the public service convinces me that the policies of governing officials in America have been influenced too little by the best technical and scientific thought and experience of those who really know the most about many of our difficult governmental problems. Also, it is believed

that, without hope of gain, a very great amount of the highest grade of scientific work is being carried on in America because of a desire to do something in the interest of the public.

Entertaining these views, I am anxious, as President of the New York Tax Commission and as Chairman of the Federal-State Planning Committee of the Tax Revision Council of the American Legislators Association, to obtain a comprehensive picture of matured, responsible and independent tax opinion. Such an authoritative word picture or summary will be a powerful influence in molding official opinion. In addition to being useful to our Commission and the work of the committee to which I have alluded, it will profoundly impress those who formulate governmental fiscal policies, materially assist those who are trying to develop plans for coordinating and integrating federal and state tax systems and exercise a powerful influence on the thinking of students in the field of public finance whether within or without the public service.

For this and other reasons, I respectfully urge that you request the senior professor (emeritus or active) in public finance in your institution, to answer as many of the questions here listed as he is able conscientiously to do. If the senior professor is not available to undertake this assignment, will you not ask the ranking professor who is available to enter the replies. The objective is to obtain the considered opinions of 200 professors, one from each of the 200 larger institutions of higher learning in the United States, plus the opinions of a selected group of recognized authorities from other walks of life. It is believed that such a representative response will produce the effect of a weighted average. Obviously, the more eminent the authority and the greater the number of men who have accepted his views the larger will be the percentage of persons entertaining those opinions. Let me stress the point that if the results of this effort are to be accepted as a correct reflection of mature American opinion, it will be necessary to secure a large number of replies. The final table which will be printed and distributed widely will contain the name of each respondent, his replies and the total answers in the affirmative and in the negative.

It will be observed that the design is to make (a) each inquiry as simple but as comprehensive as possible; (b) each question capable of being answered with a categorical "yes" or "no"; and (c) the questions impartial, colorless, and devoid of any attempt to commit one in favor of a given answer. If a respondent is in doubt or feels that he should materially qualify a "yes" or "no" answer in order truly to reflect his opinion, he is asked to enter a star (*) indicating that fact.

That no one need feel he is volunteering his efforts in a project for which someone else is receiving pay, let me add that no funds are available with which to pay a special staff and that for the aggregation of the answers I shall rely upon those who are already receiving salaries in connection with their professional and research work.

If responses to this questionnaire come up to expectations I am confident that governments in this country in the future will seek in a similar way to ascertain the consensus of opinion of those most competent to express opinions about many of our difficult governmental problems.

As it is now planned to have a meeting of the federal-state planning committee in September or early October, will you not let me know saying whether it will be possible to comply with this request and, if so, about when we may expect the filled-in questionnaire.

Yours sincerely,
MARK GRAVES,
Commissioner.

(1) These replies gave the opinions of the respondents as of January 1, 1936 but so many of them believe there are so few changes in their attitude on the various subjects that this tabulation reflects essentially their opinions as of to-day.

➡ Continued on next page.

COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY AND RESPONDENT

Table with columns: Category, Total Yes, Total No, Total *, and 40 Respondents. Rows include sections like TARIFF, PROPERTY TAXATION, INHERITANCE AND ESTATE TAXES, PERSONAL INCOME TAXES, BUSINESS TAXES, GASOLINE AND MOTOR VEHICLE TAXES, SALES TAXES, and LUXURY TAXES.

Table with columns listing university names and faculty members, and rows containing alphanumeric codes. The table is organized by university and lists various departments and their respective faculty. The data is presented in a grid format with multiple rows per university.

Continued on next page.

